

**WHAT IS CLAIMED:**

1           1. A system for general purpose interactive notifications comprising a plurality of server  
2 computers each including a notification service provider, a client computer including an object  
3 based contact system employing lists, and a network interconnecting said server computers and said  
4 client computer.

1           2. The system in accordance with claim 1 further comprising input and output means for  
2 receiving data from a user for the object based contact system and communicating to a user data  
3 from the object based contact system.

1           3. The system in accordance with claim 1 further comprising subscriber profile databases  
2 associated with said server computers and containing subscription records associated with said  
3 object based contact system including user names and information on data items comprising the  
4 contents of the subscription for said object based contact system.

1           4. The system in accordance with claim 3 further comprising active subscriber databases  
2 associated with said server computers and containing the network address of said client computer.

1           5. The system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said object based contact system  
2 employing lists includes a first manager for communicating with said notification service providers  
3 of said server computers and a contact manager for managing contact objects and smart events  
4 forwarded to it by said first manager.

1           6. The system in accordance with claim 5 wherein said first manager authenticates users to  
2 said notification service providers and receives contact objects and smart events from said  
3 notification service providers.

1           7. The system in accordance with claim 6 wherein a contact object includes a service  
2 identification, a contact identifier of the contact object, a service subscription description, the  
3 network address of a notification service provider, and smart event containing the current state of  
4 the subscription service.

1           8. The system in accordance with claim 8 wherein said smart event further includes an  
2 event identifier, identification of the subscription service, response instructions, and a response  
3 address specifying the network address of the notification service provider which is to receive a  
4 response object.

1           9. The system in accordance with claim 1 wherein said notification service provider  
2 comprises a subscription request handler and a response listener, both connected to said network,  
3 a connect and smart event dispatcher, a subscription controller, and a data object monitor connected  
4 to said network.

1           10. A method for notification service data flow in a general purpose interactive notification  
2 system including a client computer having an object based contact system employing lists (OBCL)  
3 and a plurality of server computers each including a notification service provider (NP), said method  
4 comprising the steps of:

5           said OBCL connecting to said NP, sending data regarding the capabilities of said client  
6 computer to said NP, sending a subscription identifier to said NP, and sending a contact identifier  
7 to said NP, and

8           said NP sending notifications to said OBCL whenever state updates occur on the data items  
9 that comprise the subscription contents of said OBCL.

1           11. The method in accordance with claim 10 wherein said notifications include smart  
2 events, said smart events including both state information on subscriber data items and also program  
3 instructions that specify how said OBCL responds to each smart event.